



**NORTH DAKOTA**  
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
June 30, 2004

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### **Cases of Chlamydia Increase in North Dakota**

BISMARCK, N.D. – Cases of chlamydia in North Dakota increased by 32 percent in 2003, according to Kirby Kruger, manager of the Sexually Transmitted Diseases Program for the North Dakota Department of Health.

A total of 1,655 cases of chlamydia were reported in the state in 2003, compared to 1,254 cases in 2002. Females accounted for 65 percent of the cases, and young people ages 15 to 24 for 78 percent.

“Much of the increase in reported cases is due to increased screening of females, increased testing of male partners and more sensitive laboratory testing by the public health laboratory and other laboratories,” Kruger said. “The numbers also indicate that young North Dakotans are continuing to engage in behaviors that put them at risk for sexually transmitted diseases.”

Chlamydia is usually a silent infection, with less than one-fourth of infected women experiencing any symptoms. Because it can cause more serious problems in women than in men, an effort has been made by the public and private health-care community to screen more young women who are sexually active. Complications of chlamydia in women can include scarring of the fallopian tubes, chronic pelvic pain, hysterectomy, infertility and tubal pregnancy.

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection that is spread from person to person through sexual contact. Early treatment with antibiotics cures the infection and prevents complications. People younger than 25 who are or have been sexually active should talk with their health-care provider about being tested.

"It is important that sexually active people take precautions to prevent them from becoming infected with chlamydia and other sexually transmitted diseases," Kruger said. "Abstaining from

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sex is the most effective means of prevention. Having sex with only one uninfected partner, limiting the number of sexual partners and using condoms consistently and correctly are also effective in reducing the risk of acquiring chlamydia.”

For more information, contact Kirby Kruger, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

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